

**Dude, Pull This Section OUT!**

# THE MCGILL DAILY

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Keeping it real and funny since 1911

## Students Debate McGill's Decline

*Hundreds of students make demands for commitment to quality of education*

BY VÉRONIQUE CHELIN AND JON BRICKER

### The Students' Demands

Organizers of Monday's Open Forum announced plans to present McGill's administration with a contract that commits them to ensuring the continued quality of teaching at McGill.

"We firmly believe that the student-teacher relationship is the most fundamental relationship to a thriving intellectual community," they write.

Following are the contract's key demands:

- Smaller classes and caps on class sizes to personalize the student-teacher relationship.

- A commitment to hiring based on real teaching skills and effective lecturing ability.

- Longer and more flexible office hours.

- Minimum three mandated lecture hours per week.

- Promotion of standards for instructors' professional behaviour, including encouragement of interactive classroom atmospheres in which students feel comfortable.

McGill's reputation as Canada's best is on the line if the university doesn't start doing something soon to combat trends of growing class sizes, and the disappearance of quality teaching.

That was the message Monday as students packed McConnell Engineering Building room 204 to have their say in a debate that has taken campus by storm. Some 400 students turned out, many to voice their concerns in the open forum that also featured Professors Gil Troy, Suzanne Morton, and Jeffrey Kuhner.

The debate kicked off earlier this month when Kuhner, an American History teacher, announced to his classes his plans to take a job in Chicago because McGill has failed to offer him a long-term contract. His students' plight to keep the beloved Kuhner at McGill quickly began to take on a life of its own, as a group of students began pressuring administration to take strides to refocus faculty renewal efforts. Last week, The Gazette published letters from Kuhner, Troy, and Vice-Principal Academic Luc Vinet. Monday's forum, it was widely agreed, marked the debate's coming-to-a-head.

"The problem we keep hearing from students again and again is that they don't feel that there is the commitment to quality teaching here," an impassioned Kuhner told the crowd. "Now is your chance to speak up."

"Clearly there are problems at McGill. Clearly there are problems with the teaching. What I'd like to hear is how to make it better," agreed Troy.

But for many, the forum marked a chance to highlight concerns that these problems will come at the expense of McGill's reputation for quality.

"It's only a matter of time before our dirty secret is revealed," shouted event organizer Steven Manfredi.

And for others, it was an opportunity to address an administration that they say is complicit in the decline in quality teaching and facilities.

"Where is our principal tonight?" asked U3 North American Studies student Jeff Roberts. Forum organizers confirmed that both Vinet and Principal Bernard Shapiro were invited, but neither of the two administrators showed up.

"My name is Judah Strawczynski,



Prof Kuhner: the centre of the big debate

but administration might know me better as number 962082," said another student.

Several students stood up to make calls for smaller classes, more student-teacher interaction, better evaluations, and more programs, while others raised concerns with McGill's shift to a research-intensive focus and administration's proposal for McGill College International.

But Troy said that administration is not really to blame for what's wrong with McGill. "I come back to the budgetary question. [What McGill receives] is not workable."

SSMU President Andrew Tischler agreed that the biggest challenge facing McGill is the loss of public funding. "I've seen the decline. Morale has gone down," he said. "The government thinks because you come to McGill you are worth less... and they don't have a problem with seeing us go down."

But organizers said McGill's decline has little to do with money. They presented their "Contract with McGill," outlining demands that they hope administrators can commit to - smaller classes, commitment to retraining teachers, and

mandating longer office hours and teachers' professional behaviour.

"Those are things that you can't put a price tag on.... The greatest problems aren't money problems or morale problems," Manfredi shouted. "Principal Shapiro, here is our mandate. Now sign our contract!"

The event also marked a personal moment for Kuhner, who sparked the both ire and support with his letter to The Gazette last week, titled "Crisis at McGill."

He received deafening applause from the student crowd when he rose to speak, while many of his students took advantage of the forum to ask what McGill needs to do to hold on to more faculty like Kuhner. One even described emotionally that she had come to McGill all the way from the Middle East in hopes of coming into contact with teachers like Kuhner.

And for his part, Kuhner offered to return the favour. "McGill is still the best university in North America," he said. "Should McGill offer me a long term contract, I give you my word, I'll drop the job in Chicago and come back to McGill."

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# Rethinking AIDS

*Controversial writer tries to change our view of HIV*

BY JOE MARIN

The widely held belief that AIDS is caused solely by HIV needs to be re-examined, according to Nicholas Regush.

Regush, a former medical reporter for the Montreal Gazette and producer of ABC's World News Tonight, made an appearance at the downtown Paragraphe bookstore on Monday night. He was there to promote his contentious new book, *The Virus Within: a coming epidemic*.

The virus referred to is human herpes virus 6 (HHV-6), a common ailment that is believed to reside in between 80 and 90 per cent of the population.

"My book is a mystery story," said Regush. "It's an attempt to unravel the mystery about a particular virus that probably sits in every one of us."

Regush's book is largely an account of the work of Konstance Knox and Donald Kerrigan, two researchers in Milwaukee who claim to have found a link between HHV-6 and AIDS. Regush calls Knox and Donald "two heroic scientists who challenged the model and fought the system."

The model Regush referred to is the "HIV theory of AIDS" — the almost universal belief that the human immunodeficiency virus causes acquired immune deficiency syndrome. The system is made up of the

Regush also dismissed what he called the "single bullet theory of HIV."

"We have this notion of this bullet from hell, this evil coming from outside of us that sticks to the body and somehow, over a

“When looking at medicine in our culture you basically have to follow the money.”

research institutions, grant agencies, and pharmaceutical companies that Regush claims have a financial interest in the theory's legitimacy.

"When looking at medicine in our culture you basically have to follow the money," he said. "When you do that, you find that there's a rich association amongst the players on the field. For example, in Canada, you find that people who test drugs for HIV have stock in the very same companies that produce those drugs."

While he made it clear that he does not claim HHV-6 to be the direct cause of AIDS,

period of time, through mechanisms still undetermined, dismantles the entire immune system."

Regush instead favours a comprehensive approach that looks at a variety of potential factors, like HHV-6 and other herpes viruses, and how those agents might be working together to cause AIDS.

Regush's controversial book has provoked discussion and created outrage throughout the AIDS research community. He claims that of the more than 2,000 emails he receives in a week, between 10 per cent and 15 per cent are threats.

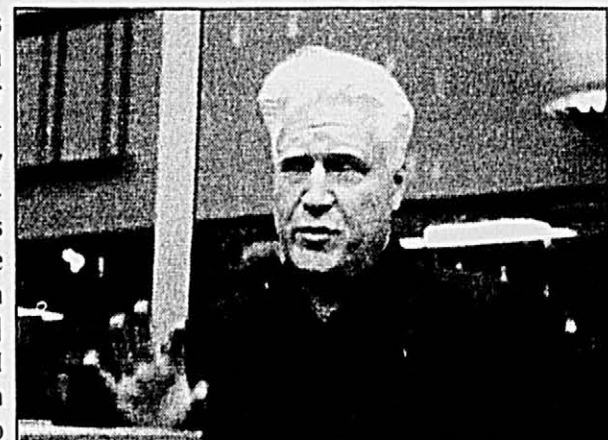
"Scientists write in from major research institutes and say 'you're a dick-head.' There's even this one character from [Montreal] who says I shouldn't even be allowed to talk about this."

What's he going to do, come down here and shoot me?"

One of the most outspoken Regush critics has been McGill's own Mark Wainberg, director of the university's AIDS Centre. Wainberg is concerned that Regush's book presents a danger because it uses persuasive language and scientific inaccuracies to mislead a gullible public.

But he questioned the value in even debating Regush's claims since, according to Wainberg, they have little basis in fact.

"Would you want me to debate someone who said that cigarettes didn't cause



Nicholas Regush thinks several factors — not HIV — cause AIDS.

cancer? People don't have the right to say whatever they feel when the public health is at risk. I just don't see the legitimacy of wanting to engage in debate on a topic for which there is irrefutable proof that HIV and not HHV-6 is the cause of AIDS."

Wainberg also fears that arguments like Regush's could have a dangerous effect on people's attitudes.

"If he, through demeaning the role of HIV, manages to persuade even one person that safe-sex precautions are not worth taking, then that would be very unfortunate," Wainberg said.

# A Liberal Take on Environment

*Grit environment critic says that businesses have solved environmental problems, and that average citizens can do nothing to help*

BY DAMIEN BUTVICK

The environment is improving for the most part, despite the mass hysteria that seems to have penetrated the world, said Robert Benoit, Liberal Party Environment Critic, on Monday.

The MNA and keynote speaker at McGill's first annual Festival of the Environment Monday spoke before a small crowd in Leacock 232 about environmental trends for the new millennium.

"There is no doubt in my mind, no doubt whatsoever, that now the environment is better," Benoit said. Some of this improvement, Benoit claimed, can be attributed to wake-up calls by scientists,

businessmen, and scholars who predicted an environmental armageddon in the early 1970s.

"When these people called the shots, [the announcement] woke up some of us and, overall, the environment improved," he said. He also cited statistics which suggested that the world's overpopulation problem will end by 2050.

Despite his positive outlook on the future of the environment, Benoit spent the majority of his speech highlighting the challenges it faces.

"The first and the worst problem that we are going to see in the next few years is the water," he said. "As you know, the population of the world today is about six billion people, and 1.3 billion of these people don't have [easy access to] water."

"More than 2.6 billion of these people have bad quality water. So, four citizens out of six in the world at this point have no water or bad quality water and this situation is certainly not going to improve."

Benoit also said that water management will be a huge problem in the future, as we are sapping our reservoirs too quickly.

Benoit pointed out that the planet can expect effects from global warming in the future. "We are going to see extreme

weather, extreme effects, and extreme disasters," he predicted, using the storm that paralyzed Paris three months ago as an illustration. He told how many years ago he was able to ski on his birthday in April, but cannot do so anymore due to lack of snow.

Benoit also discussed society's role in the improvement of the environment. The vast majority of people, he claims, are concerned about the welfare of the environment, but there is very little that they can actually do about it.

"People are worried about global warming, but there's not much they can do about it, it's way over their heads."

Benoit suggested that many people's concern with environmental issues centres around their own personal health issues. It seems as though more people are concerned with how the environment affects them personally than with the state of the planet in general, he said. As a result, he

“People are worried about global warming, but there's not much they can do about it. It's way over their heads.”

“With the help of you people, with the help of God, and with the help of good politicians, like I am, the world will be a better place to live.”

feels that people are going overboard with their precautions such as saturating their children with sunscreen before they go out and play or avoiding tap water.

Benoit concluded his speech by stressing the importance of active involvement in protecting the environment.

"With the help of you people, with the help of God, and with the help of good politicians, like I am, the world will be a better place to live."

Shelina Jiwa, a U3 Microbiology student who co-organized the Environmental Festival, disagreed with many of the Benoit's comments.

"His arguments were a little inconsistent," she said. "He said that the

environmental situation is getting better, and then he said that we should raise people's awareness about the environment, and then he said that people can't really do anything to improve the environment anyway. His ideas didn't really gell."

Jiwa felt that Benoit didn't give enough substantiation to his claims, and had a very unscientific approach to looking at the environment. "He didn't seem to have many real environmental concerns, which I thought was odd considering he is the Liberal's environmental critic," she added.

Jiwa was particularly incensed about Benoit's implication that environmental concerns were over the heads of average citizens.

"We're in a dire situation with our environment right now and to say that we can't do anything about it shows a very short-sighted view on things. There's a lot of little things that can be done."



Liberal Environment Critic Robert Benoit



# War of the Wired World

**M**a Bell is threateningly close to becoming Big Brother unless someone steps in to prevent it.

Federal regulators will have to take a close look at BCE Inc.'s plans to acquire CTV, the national television network. While they're at it, they should keep a watch over moves by Rogers Communications Inc. and Quebecor Inc. to buy Montreal-based Groupe Vidéotron Ltée., the country's third-largest cable-TV provider.

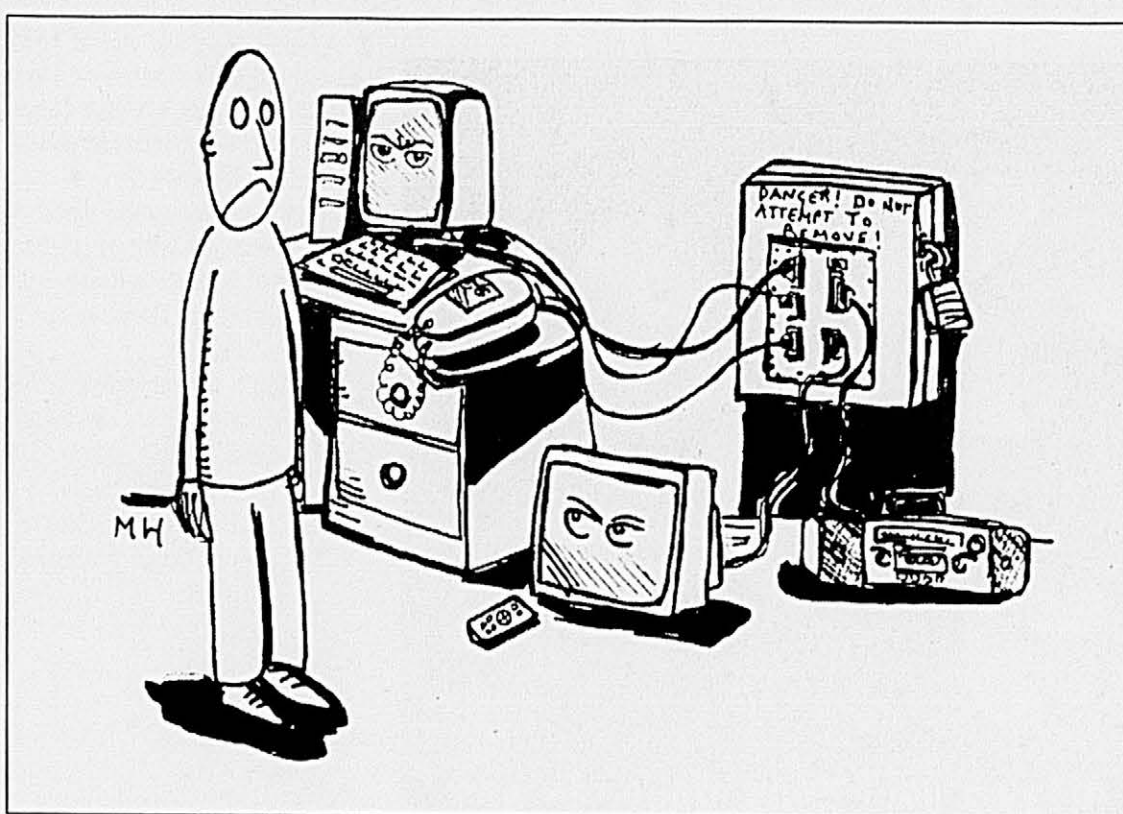
Rogers, Quebecor, and BCE – the parent of Bell Canada – are locked in a three-way duel to the death to determine who will control the lanes of the ever-expanding information superhighway in Ontario and Quebec.

Rogers has a head start, with high-speed TV cables serving 2.3 million homes at much faster speeds than Bell's traditional phone lines. But BCE has the upper hand in the long term: house by house, it's installing fibre-optic cables that are 20 times faster than Rogers'. And Quebecor, with a stake in the Sun Media chain and ownership of the Canoe.ca web site, can supply the desperately needed content.

Each of these companies wants to integrate various channels of communication – TV and phone cables, wireless phone networks, and satellite services – with content such as email, news, entertainment, the internet, TV, and mobile telephony. As one company executive said, they want to create the "AOL-Time Warner of the North."

And therein lies the catch: the history of media convergence has shown that content diversity and editorial independence suffer whenever too many content providers and distributors end up in too few hands.

One of the most famous cases pitted Orson Welles, the director and star of the 1941 classic film *Citizen Kane*, against media baron William Randolph Hearst, whom the movie lambasted. Hearst used his control over American newspapers,



radio stations, and magazines to excoriate the film in reviews and to coerce exhibitors into refusing to show it. He largely succeeded: *Kane* didn't get its recognition as one of the best movies of all time until 25 years later.

In the 1970s, the United States government implemented anti-trust laws to separate the production and distribution of made-for-TV movies. The Justice Department alleged that the three major American networks were blocking third-party producers and unfairly monopolizing programming through their stranglehold on the conduits of television.

More recently, after ABC and Disney merged, Disney CEO Michael Eisner announced on National Public Radio that he preferred "ABC not cover Disney." Likewise, lawyers for Time Warner tried to suppress a report in one of the media conglomerate's magazines about a lawsuit

against the company's flagship rag, *Time*.

The list of possible conflicts of interest goes on: will CTV report negatively on Bell Canada if the telephone company swindles its customers? Will television station TVA favour the Montreal Mirror over Hour magazine in its coverage? Will Ted Rogers become the next Hearst, and create news, even wars, to report on?

The matter bodes so seriously that the federal Competition Bureau should be called in. The Bureau will be faced with a difficult analysis: when it disallowed the union of Royal Bank and Bank of Montreal in December, 1998, it did so because the proposed merger, in the opinion of the Bureau, would have resulted "in a substantial lessening of competition in 104 of the 224 markets" in which the banks compete, which it felt was a "cause for concern."

But with the present case, concretely measurable indicators such as price and

branch access won't factor in. Instead, the Bureau will have to consider more abstract notions of editorial autonomy, control over content, and programming variety.

The CRTC will play a role as well. If any of Rogers, BCE, or Quebecor gets its wish and gains control of the main channels of the digital revolution, the Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission would be wise to step in and protect the consumer. It could mandate divestment of the company's cable assets, or it could require the company to allow third parties to purchase access at regulated prices, just as the Commission did in the long-distance phone market.

Either way the interests of all Canadians in a free and independent media and competitive prices will have to be closely guarded. Big players in a big game are perfectly acceptable; Big Brother is not.

## Daily Staff Elections

**Elections for the 2000-2001 Daily Editorial Board will occur at 5:30 pm on Thursday, April 6. All positions are open. To run for a position, stop by The Daily office in Shatner B-03 and follow the instructions on the Misc. Board.**

**Must be Daily staff to run. All students who have completed 6 articles or photographs and/or 3 features and/or 6 three-hour units of production time qualify as staff. Join us, children, in our never-ending search for a new utopia. Also, bring us Timbits.**

## APATHY RALLY by Channing Rodman



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# Sovereignist Ads Pop Up on Campus

*Students criticize SSMU and Zoom Media handling of anti-Clarity Bill ad*

BY SIMON RABINOVITCH

Sovereignist propaganda has no place on campus, according to students angered by a recent government of Quebec ad campaign that made its way on to McGill's bathrooms walls.

The ad was part of the province's ongoing publicity campaign aimed at stirring up opposition to the recent federal Clarity Bill. It appeared in Zoom Media spaces across campus despite a policy that gives the SSMU and the university the right to reject political ad campaigns. At least one Quebec university had already rejected the ads.

"This is obviously political propaganda," said Liberal McGill VP External Alana Tiemessen. "They're apparently trying to rope in students."

The campus ad depicts a bird whose beak is tied shut and reads in French, "Ottawa wants to keep our mouths shut." It goes on to detail the Quebec government's ire with the federal Clarity Bill that sets out to stiffen the conditions placed on federal recognition of any sovereignty mandate emerging from future Quebec referendums.

In small type, the ad also states that "Ottawa would like to place our political future in the hands of the federal Parliament. The House of Commons, in which 75 per cent of MPs come from outside Quebec, wants to decide this future instead of us. We will protest before our mouths are shut."



Students were angered by this ad found on campus recently

"I don't think these sorts of ads have a place on campus. You don't want to turn the campus into a playground for political agendas," said Tiemessen.

She says the government should be putting its money to better use and that she's surprised that SSMU let the ads go up.

"You don't see the Liberals doing this sort of thing," she added.

But SSMU General Manager Guy Brisebois, whose job it is to decide how the Zoom ad spaces can and can't be used, admitted the ad was inappropriate and said he never should have allowed the ad to go up.

"I did receive it, but for some reason I didn't stop it," he said. "It probably stayed on my desk for a bit too long and they went and put it up."

Under the Zoom contracts, if either McGill or SSMU find an ad offensive, they reserve the right to reject it. When either party fails to let Zoom know that they won't accept an ad, Zoom goes ahead and posts it.

But Claude Breault, Zoom's Communications Director says Zoom still never should have put the ad up campuswide. A new employee, unaware of the separate contracts with SSMU and McGill, took Brisebois' acceptance of the ad as license to post it in other campus ad panels. The university, Breault said, never even had an opportunity to turn down the ad.

"We have a system that works very good," said Breault, "but unfortunately it did not this time."

But he also noted that once the ad went up, the university never called on Zoom to take it down. The ad campaign ran its full course, finally ending earlier this week.

And according to Breault, at least one of the six Quebec universities approached with the ad rejected it. Breault declined to divulge which university that was.

Meanwhile, the Clarity Bill, which is currently working its way through Parliament, has outraged leaders of the Quebec separatist movement. That's why, according to cabinet advisor Claude Plante, the government needs to advertise and send a message that the federal government's efforts are anti democratic.

"People have a basic right in democracies to determine their own future. This is recognized internationally by all democracies," said Plante.

"And with this law now, the people of Quebec are being told that they are not intelligent enough, that they can no longer determine their future."

Plante also says the federal government is manipulating legislative procedures to advance its federal agenda. He also believes that the federal government is just scared that the next referendum may return a sovereignty mandate.

"The government recognized the 'No' results in 1980 and again in 1995, but now that they are afraid it may go the other way, they want to change the rules of the game," Plante said.

# Science's Animal Instincts

*Animal testing debated at McGill*

BY JODI LATHAM

Speakers on both sides of the animal research debate expressed their views at last Tuesday's Panel Discussion on Animal Research, organized by QPIRG McGill.

The event, which featured a range of respected thinkers, activists and academics who offered their opinions on the necessity of testing on animals, took place at a packed Leacock 232.

The first to speak was Dr. Pierre Lachapelle, assistant professor of Ophthalmology at McGill and Clinical Neurophysiologist at the Montreal Children's Hospital. He argued that animal testing is necessary for scientific research and teaching, adding that where research requires a complete organism, alternatives such as human tissue and computer models are not sufficient.

"Wherever possible it [animal research] should be avoided. However, where everything else has failed it is neces-

sary," he said. Although he praised protest groups for raising awareness of both scientists and the public about the abuse of animals in medical research labs, he argued that rather than banning animal research outright, guidelines should be put

tain situations but said that "animals should be used only if the researcher's best efforts to find an alternative have failed."

She argued that where research on animal subjects is absolutely necessary, there must be guidelines in place to protect the psychological and physiological well being of the animal. "[We need to] make sure that acceptable care is taken when research is conducted on animals," she said.

Her organization, for example, awards a Certificate of Good Animal Practice to those research groups which have a humane approach toward animal testing. McGill has been awarded such a certificate.

Dr. Ray Greek, president of Americans For Medical Advancement, a non-profit organization aimed at exposing

the hazards of using research gained from animal testing, argued that most medical discoveries could have been made without the use of animals. "You don't have to throw a rat out of a window to know grav-

ity works," he said. Greek went on to argue that not all animals react to drugs in the same way as a human does, so it is not always possible to predict how humans will be effected. He pointed out that for decades, scientists denied the carcinogenic effects of smoking because none arose in the mice used. "Animal models cannot predict results in humans," he said.

Gloria Grow and Arryn Ketter, representatives of The Fauna Foundation, a shelter for neglected and abused animals, took a more philosophical stance. Grow called on researchers to take responsibility for the harm that they inflict on animals, pointing to the substandard conditions the research animals are forced to live in. Ketter, who is currently completing a Master's degree at McGill's Center for Medicine, Ethics and Law, compared research on animals to tests conducted on humans by the Nazis. She suggested that unless researchers could prove their research is "morally permissible" then we should assume it isn't.

"There should be limits on what we [researchers] can do. There should be the same ethical guidelines as those used on humans," she said.





# Do A Little Turn on the Catwalk

BY J. KELLY NESTRUCK

*Hey Supermodel, what's it like being pretty?*

- Bran Van 3000 on "Supermodel"

They've learned to manage money and style at the seventh annual Management Undergraduate Society fashion show was a decided hit for both the massive crowd that filed into the Windsor Station concourse last Friday night and for the participants themselves. With months of hype on its side and an attendance of approximately 1,300, p[h]assion deserved the nomination for event of the year that it garnered earlier this week.

Doors opened at seven and the show was scheduled to begin at eight, but following the lead of professional fashion shows in Paris and Rome, the show got underway p[h]assionably late, about forty minutes past the hour. The audience did not care however, and gleefully took advantage of the free Guru and vodka that was being handed out. (Note to those who have disparaged Guru in the past: it is actually palatable when mixed with some vodka.)

Finally, with the excitement in the concourse possibly equaling that of the Ricky Martin fans screaming in the nearby Molson Stadium, out came the first set of models with a style and suaveness comparable to that of the Latin singing sensation. Then followed designer after designer in rough but effective choreographed walks down the catwalk. The names represented included DKNY, Arithmetik, Hugo Boss, and Diesel.

The audience appreciatively applauded each segment and went wild for some. The highlight of the show was when the male

models loosened up for the 55 DSL scene. Screams and whistles emanated from the mouths of the primarily female crowd.

Dana Gibson, U2 Political Science, enjoyed the show and the atmosphere of enlightened decadence immensely. "I think that it's very professionally done," she commented during the intermission. "I really like the choreography. I'm impressed."

Gibson's experience was not tainted by the high ticket prices, either. "It's going towards AIDS research. I feel good that I'm

awareness programs in Canada.

The show was exciting not only for the audience. Julie Valette, U3 Arts, thoroughly enjoyed her experience as



Julie Valette

with the attendance," she said. "People seemed to really enjoy it."

This year's fashion show went a step further than those of years past. Previous shows have been in much smaller venues, such as Le Medley or Metropolis. "This year we really went forward with it," Khoury said. "We just decided to go all the way."

One aspect that several dis-

appointed men and women in the audience noticed was missing this year was the famous lingerie scene. Khoury emphasized that it was simply a matter of mixing things up. "We did things differently this year. We didn't want people to expect the same thing that's been going on every year." For fans who were disappointed this year, not to worry. The elimination of the lingerie scene was only temporary. If a good designer is found next year, it will be back on the catwalk.

P[h]assion was a resounding success, and for this intrepid journalist, it proved a great learning experience. The show is not open only to Management students, so perhaps next year I will try to realize my dreams of becoming a supermodel. Paris, here I come.

P[h]assion was a resounding success, and for this intrepid journalist, it proved a great learning experience. The show is not open only to Management students, so perhaps next year I will try to realize my dreams of becoming a supermodel. Paris, here I come.



giving to a good cause."

Indeed, apart from a few red ribbons pinned onto some in the audience, it was easy to forget that the whole party was for a good cause. Through p[h]assion, The Management students were raising money for AIDS charities through the Farha Foundation and CANFAR. The Farha Foundation was created by Montreal businessman Ronald Farha, an individual infected with AIDS, in 1992. Since its inception it has distributed more than \$2,200,000 to AIDS organizations throughout the province. CANFAR is another AIDS group that funds research as well as HIV/AIDS

auditions for the fashion show were back in early autumn and Valette and the rest of the models have been rehearsing since then. Valette said that it was difficult not to get caught up in the whole rush and she had to remind herself repeatedly that it was just a small fashion show. In the end, it was very rewarding both personally and, "because it's a great cause," she said.

Likewise, assistant director Emmanuelle Khoury was elated with the results of her hard work. "I was very happy

an amateur model. "It's a great opportunity to meet people," she said after the show. "It was a lot of stress, but the result was worth it."

## Mosaïca's Diversity Inspires

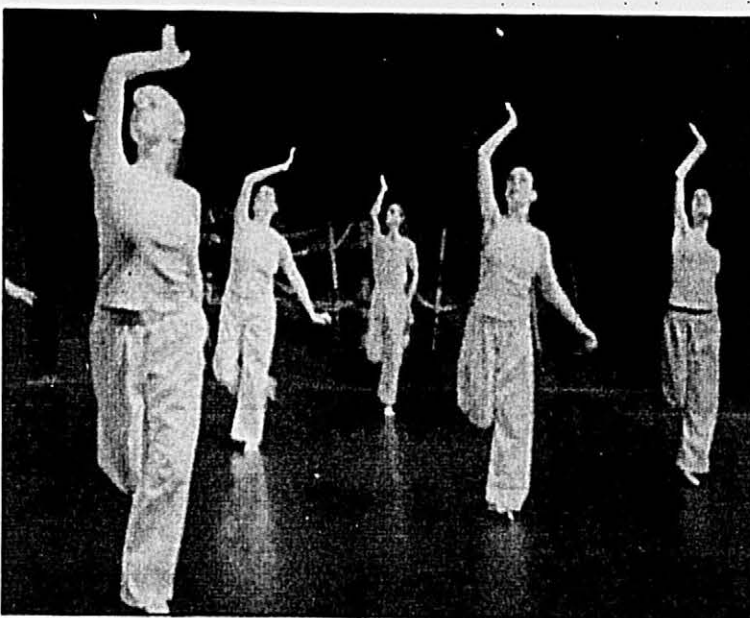
BY KELLY RICHARD

*Diversity: n. - a. the condition of being diverse; difference, unlikeness. b. divers manners or sorts. c. the result of 18 dancers' choreography*

After two hours of beautiful choreography and striking emotions at Mosaïca, I was left with feelings of joy and sorrow. Joy for the beauty of the show and its dancers, and sorrow that I couldn't be up there with this wonderful group of dancers who make up the sole dance group at McGill.

The McGill Contemporary Dance Ensemble is a group of students from McGill who annually bring their love of dance to Players theatre. The ensemble is comprised of students with a variety of backgrounds in dance or other creative experiences. Although there is no set "theme" for this year's show, its diversity may in itself be a theme. The show is comprised of 17 pieces of choreography that are diverse in style and emotion. The show's dancers, music, styles, and choreography all sparkle with variety.

It takes the whole year to produce the ensemble's yearly show, and all of that hard work paid off. The opening night's



Contemporary Dance Ensemble performs one of their first numbers in Mosaïca

performance was solid and well orchestrated. Traditionally, opening night is the shakiest of all, due to nerves and doubts regarding the choreography. However, this year the opening night was polished and professional.

Each dancer in the troupe has the opportunity to choreograph a piece for the show, and these varied segments are bounded by the opening and finale pieces, choreographed by the three coordinators, Sacha Crittendon, Amy Harvey, and Libby

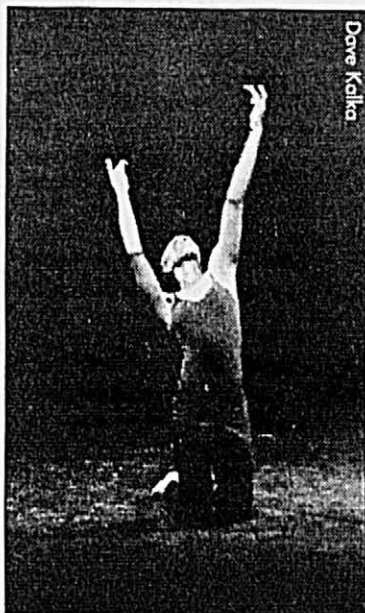
Lenkinski.

The opening and finale pieces showcase the fact that every one of these dancers is individual and has his or her own sense of style. The opening piece contains powerful drum rhythms, and the choreography is energetic as various groups dance to different beats. Each person feels the music differently, and the choreography "tries to interpret rhythms in different ways in order to reflect that difference", says Crittendon.

Catherine Farquharson

This strong opening showed individuality within a group of very different dancers, and set a powerful tone for the rest of the performance. The finale, on the other hand, was about "appreciating each others styles and ways of dancing," says Lenkinski, and achieves this goal by having each dancer, individually or in pairs, come out to centre stage and dance in his or her own style.

There are too many wonderful pieces to mention here, so you'll just have to go see it for yourselves.



Dore Kalia

## SSMU FASHION TIPS

At Management's recent p[h]assion extravaganza, the fashion show was not entirely relegated to the catwalk. Knowing that the Windsor Station Concourse would be swarming with photographers and fashion journalists (among which the McGill Daily, of course, is held in high esteem), the audience was dressed to the nines and various VIPs could be seen strutting their stuff during the intermission.

The McGill Daily caught up with two noted SSMU schmoozers, VP "I wear my sunglasses at night" Woytek Baraniak and VP "Not quite as much hair gel" Kevin McPhee, as they displayed their wares on Friday night.

Baraniak was sporting a polyester blue shirt from the United Colors of Benetton and shoes from Aldo. The highlight of his ensemble was indubitably the pants, though. "These are from Simons on St. Catherine's," Baraniak told the McGill Daily in an exclusive interview. "[They were] my mother's Christmas present to me. I still don't buy my own clothes. I have to rely on my mother."

McPhee was a little less avant-garde in his selection of apparel. "I'm a conservative guy," he admitted. The suit was one of the more flattering designs from Tip-Top Tailors. "The shoes are from the Bay. They're Hush-Puppies. They're a little nicer shoe, but they're still from the Bay."

The true completing touch came from McPhee's elegant, but sassy selection of glasses. "The glasses are Calvin Klein," McPhee confided. "You can't go cheap with glasses. You need to see. You really don't want to fuck around with your vision."

Baraniak approved of McPhee's look. "You look like a young republican," he remarked. "You always look like a young republican."

Further investigation yielded the startling revelations revealed in this transcript of the McGill Daily interview:

McGill Daily: Are you here out of a personal interest in fashion?

Kevin McPhee: I was actually supposed to be modeling this evening. But, I was sick last minute so I couldn't go up on stage.

Woytek Baraniak: We both have gained 15 pounds this year in office, so it wasn't about to happen.

KM: I didn't stop eating the last... I'm not even going to go there.

Daily: Are you saying you're the fat cats of SSMU?

WB: No. You're saying we are.

Daily: What about that ring, Mr. McPhee?

KM: This is a wedding ring. I'm actually engaged to be married.

Daily: Are you really? Seriously?

KM: No.

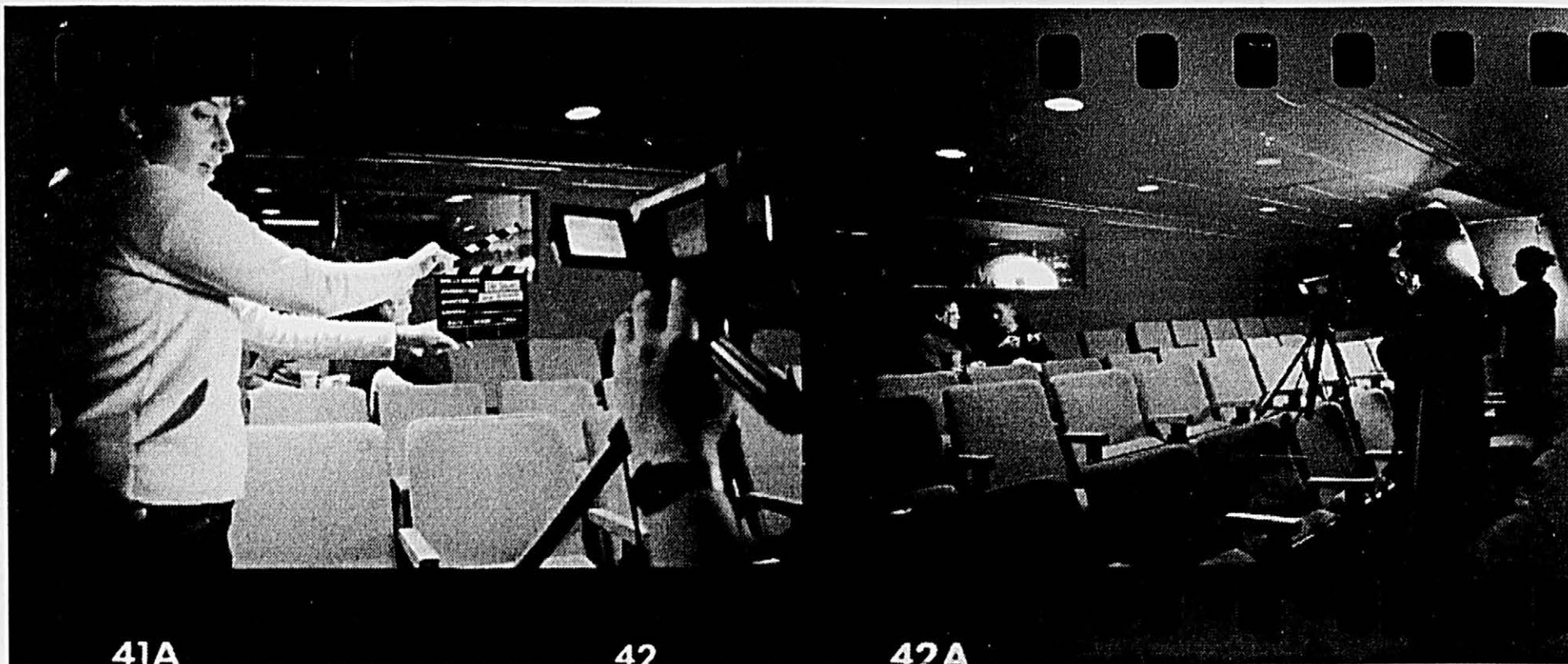
[A brief discussion ensued over whether or not that would end up in Slibel and Lander.]

WB: Apparently, he's also wearing a cock ring. I don't know, though. That's what I hear.

KM: I won't comment on that.

Baraniak and McPhee are available for fashion consultations Monday to Friday in the new William and Mary Brown Student Building.





Pierre-Alain Parfond

# High Stakes Film-making

*The Steaks is a homegrown feature with university appeal*

BY GABE FLORES

Gavin Heffernan is a rare breed at McGill. He is a visionary, with a charm all his own and an enthusiasm nothing short of contagious.

When we first spoke about the film he wrote, stars in, and directs, entitled *The Steaks*, I synthesized his film into one sentence. "So it's basically MTV's *The Real World* in a car?" I asked. But as it turns out, there is much more depth to the movie, now shooting at numerous locations on McGill's campus.

*The Steaks* features four contestants, Brian, Lauren, Sarah, and Finn, selected by a radio station to spend six days of the week in a Jeep Cherokee. Reports are filed from the Cherokee, charting each contestant's psychological state, and how they are behaving towards one another.

Seems simple enough, but the story really takes place with each of the contestants trying to sweat the others out in the ensuing 23 days. Meanwhile, across campus, students are placing wagers on who will bow out first, and who will eventually

take the Cherokee as grand prize. While roughly half of the film chronicles the events that take place inside the Jeep, the scenes with the supporting characters, Rona, Rachel, and Jake shed some light on the real motivations and frame of mind of each contestant.

Heffernan began to write this coming of age feature before he even had his first university class. After a brief stint with New Line working on the set of *Detroit City Rocks*, a movie that critics lambasted, Heffernan caught the movie bug. *The Blair Witch Project*, with its rags to riches story, and the advent of digital video gave him the impetus to write his own screenplay.

Since the beginning, Heffernan seemed to have luck on his side. It's not every teenager that gets to work on a movie set, much less make the contacts necessary to provide valuable feedback on how to write a workable script. From the dorms of upper rez, Heffernan recruited volunteers to design props, organize shooting schedules, and seek out sponsors for what could have been an organisational nightmare. The

result, thus far, with approximately 20 per cent of the shooting completed, and 150 contributing in one fashion or another, is everyman's story of their first encounter with university.

*The Steaks*, in its simplest form, depicts "what it's like to be in university," according to Heffernan. There are the existential questions everyone asks themselves when first choosing a major, and the doubt they feel when they finally realize that the past four years have been walking down the proverbial "wrong path." University is the first time teenagers are entrusted with feeding themselves, studying on their own volition, and with the responsibility of determining their future.

*The Steaks* is not an exercise in method acting. The roles are not huge departures for any of the students in this production. Heffernan admits that the part he plays of Brian is not much different from his own personality. They both have a bullheaded determination, and are both obsessed with movies. And in Heffernan's words, "There is no excuse for this [*The Steaks*] not to be excellent."

The cast that auditioned early last semester is also in on the lucky streak Heffernan's project is riding. Lauren Abrahams, who plays the role of a 19-year-old shy student keenly aware of her lack of experience with members of the opposite sex, has done work with CBC. Ruby Hobbs, has done *Baltimore Waltz* and *The Heidi Chronicles* at McGill plays the supporting role of Rachel, a conniving seductress with a hidden agenda. Ashley Wheaton, another supporting actress in the role of Rona, sees her small role as an opportunity to contribute to the behind the scenes' logistical work in this project.

Heffernan cites the advent of digital video as one of the catalysts in making this feature. Using film would have made this project prohibitively expensive, and would not have given him the same flexibility of shooting and splicing the footage on the spot. Besides Heffernan points out that the Sundance Festival is now 10% digital, and where digitally shot features were once shunned, they are now the darlings of independent film makers. It is only a matter of time before the medium

will improve to the point where the disparity in quality between film and video will disappear.

It's no mystery how Heffernan has assembled a team of dedicated students to take part in the project. *The Steaks* fills a void, a niche in the McGill student community of bringing together students, not with delusions of grandeur, but with a common goal of producing a feature film reflecting their university experience. When asked what he hoped to accomplish with *The Steaks*, Heffernan paused for a moment, choosing his words carefully. "At the very least, it will be a yearbook. But yearbooks are for high school. This is university, the so-called real world."

*The Steaks will be entering phase II of shooting this Friday. If you would like to get involved, The Steaks has issued a call for volunteers, particularly extras, for scenes to be shot in the coming weeks. For more information, consult The Steaks website at*

<http://homepages.go.com/~lbesteak>

## Delicately Sensual

*Suzy Lake's Fascia nothing like anatomy class*

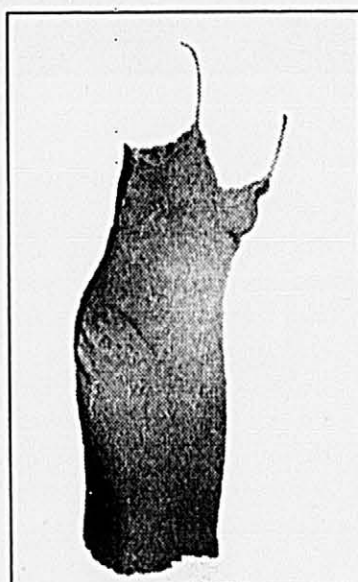
BY SARAH COHEN

*Fascia* is the title of Suzy Lake's latest exhibition. It is also the name of the fibrous membrane that serves as an envelope for the body's underlying organs and muscles. But the work Suzy Lake presented is much more sensual than its biological appellation would suggest. Actually, her work on the body is astonishingly voluptuous.

Suzy Lake created a series of flesh-toned silhouettes of slips mounted on paper. They are just silhouettes. The real body has to be imagined by the scanning-eyes of visitors. "With a Determined Heart" and "Sweeping slip" are the names of a

succession of four old fashioned women's slips, in a seductive pale-rose. The cloth won't slide onto the floor because of two extremely thin straps which draw the shape of the shoulders. The square neck is bordered in lace that reminds us the delicate lingerie of the thirties Elisabeth Taylor wore when she tried desperately to attract Paul Newman in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*. One can imagine how sexy it is.

Sexy but not vulgar, thanks to the rounded forms Suzy Lake followed with her scissors. Actually, the silhouette is one of a mature woman. The artist wrinkled and folded the tissue so that under the contours of the slip, one can guess the presence of a charming stomach. Through the game of



curves and shadows, one sees the silhouette bending right, or left, and imagines a woman leaning on her hips.

This impression of lightness is actually the result of an interesting technique. Suzy Lake used fragile layers of emulsions peeled from photographic prints of her own skin. She sewed the sheets together to create her sculptural representations of feminine slips. The thin montage is stuck on tougher paper. This technique makes her work even more intriguing.

With the four rose slips is a series of photographs which suggest a woman's arm sweeping up with a brush. Another slip, white, made out of plastic and suspended in the air is also part of the presen-

tation. This one carries the name of the exhibition: *Fascia*. On the plastic, the justice symbol is represented: a woman brandishing a scale.

Suzy Lake is an artist from Detroit who came to Canada in 1968. Her previous work was often identified as feminist. (Besides, she used to work with Cindy Sherman). Indeed, Suzy Lake has combined the sensual image of women and their still inherent housewife status. This subtle gathering and her interesting work on the body make *Fascia* a deliciously cynical show.

*Fascia is now exhibiting at 372 St. Catherine St. W. Suite 520 from Wednesday to Friday, 12 to 6pm.*



## daily classifieds

Ads may be placed through the Daily Business Office, Room B-07, University Centre, 9h00-14h00. Deadline is 14h00, two working days prior to publication. McGill Students & Staff (with valid ID): \$4.75 per day, 3 or more consecutive days, \$4.25 per day. General Public: \$6.00 per day, or \$5.00 per day for 3 or more consecutive days. Extra charges may apply, prices include applicable GST or PST. Full payment should accompany your advertising order and may be made in cash or by personal cheque (for amounts over \$20 only). For more information, please visit our office or call 398-6790. WE CANNOT TAKE CLASSIFIED ADS OVER THE PHONE. PLEASE CHECK YOUR AD CAREFULLY WHEN IT APPEARS IN THE PAPER. The Daily assumes no financial responsibility for errors, or damages due to errors. Ad will re-appear free of charge upon request if information is incorrect due to our error. The Daily reserves the right not to print any classified ad.

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## LA CLINIQUE D'INFORMATION JURIDIQUE

DE MCGILL tiendra son Assemblée générale annuelle des membres **vendredi, 31 Mars 2000** à 12h30, dans la salle 201 au 3644 Peel (édifice du Chancellor Day Hall), Montréal (Québec). Tous les étudiants de l'Université McGill sont les bienvenus. Tous les étudiants de l'Université McGill sont automatiquement membres associés de la corporation et ont droit de vote lors de l'Assemblée générale annuelle.

## THE MCGILL LEGAL INFORMATION CLINIC

will hold its annual General Assembly on **Friday, March 31 2000** at 12:30 p.m. in room 201 of Chancellor Day Hall (3644 Peel, Montreal, Qc.). All McGill students are welcome. All McGill students are automatically associate members of the corporation and can vote at the General Assembly.



# CD REVIEWS



CLASSIC ALBUM CIRCA 1993

**TRANSMISSIONS FROM THE SATELLITE HEART**  
THE FLAMING LIPS  
(WARNER)

Almost 20 years after the Flaming Lips were formed by Wayne Coyne, after numerous line-up changes and albums, the Lips released *Soft Bulletin* (1999). Suddenly, music critics appeared out of nowhere like parasitic distant relatives of lottery-winners with high praise for the Flaming Lips. The Lips' ingenious album, *Transmissions from the Satellite Heart*, probably showed up on the critics' radar, but they chose to ignore it.

Turning a geographical disadvantage (Oklahoma) into inspiration, and working with a clean slate devoid of lyric-writing formalities, *Transmissions from the Satellite Heart* is a refreshing album. After all, Coyne (vocals, guitar), Ronald Jones (guitar), Michael Ivins (bass), and Steve Drozd (drums) were stuck in the Midwest trying to maintain a living. If anybody had an original perspective it was them.

*Transmissions from the Satellite Heart* is an obnoxiously distorted rock album, but each song has numerous sugary, McCartney-esque melodies. Thus, the Flaming Lips' comparisons with bands like Built to Spill are relatively justified. Most tracks have extra-instrumental effects and quirky sounds, courtesy of producer Keith Cleversly, in the same vein as Nigel Godrich's work with Radiohead and Beck.

Songs like "Turn it On" and "She Don't Use Jelly" are basic rock songs, and for most of the album, the Lips don't stray from simple chord progressions. But two things make the entire album notable: Coyne's famously odd lyrics (in accord with his belief that songwriters utilize too few aspects of life), and the delicate melodies that are heightened because of their contrast with the fuzzy rhythms.

For instance, "Be My Head," the ultimate pop song, with "ah-ah" Beatles harmonies contains various lead-guitar arpeggios and runs underneath lyrics like "you can be my head / cause I've ruined this one / blasting holes where it used to be." Similarly, "Slow Nerve Action" revolves around a monstrous guitar melody, over which Coyne sadly sings, "now she's got a man / who don't like dogs / and just likes cars." What distinguishes this from feeble power-pop is Drozd's Bonham-like adoration of the thunderous bass drum-almost every song is grounded by a drum beat that sounds like it's emanating from the depths of a cave.

People remember the quick novelty

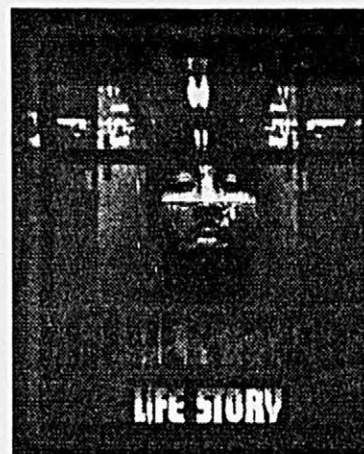
fame the Lips achieved with "She Don't Use Jelly," which sadly culminated in an appearance on *Beverly Hills 90210*. The Flaming Lips may not have handled their publicity well then, but they know a thing or two about making refreshing and ultimately timeless rock albums. *Transmissions from the Satellite Heart* is only one of them.

—Yobei Igarashi

**BLACK ROB**  
**LIFE STORY**  
(BAD BOY Y2G/BMG)

B-boys and b-girls alike have been bombarded with countless newschoolers-claiming-to-be-oldschoools. They've been getting hit with mad albums with the same beats accompanied by the same flows interluded by the same Herb-assed skits. That's exactly what you'd expect from Black Rob with his debut, *Life Story*. Looking at the 21-track playlist is like reading an issue of *The Source*; there are only two tracks that don't feature somebody. The second bad sign is that Puffy is all over this album like acne on a 15-year-old.

The album, surprisingly, is not a complete write-off. But take heed y'all: my

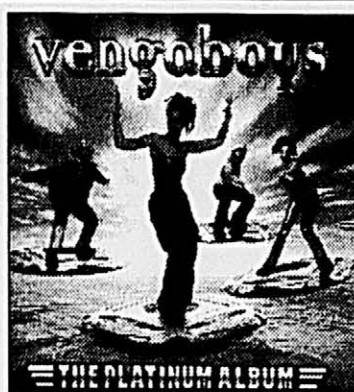


expectations were lower than a Young MC comeback and we're talking relative here. You can't compare this to a Dilated Peoples record and expect it to compete. Black Rob is rap, Dilated Peoples is hip-hop. But once you take your grain of salt, it's easy to see the dichotomy that forms on *Life Story*; the times when B.R. really shines and the times when you see why everybody hates Bad Boy.

Rob displays his storytelling ability in "I Love You Baby," but then makes a bad cover of Slick Rick's *Children Story*. *Muscle Game* is another example where the hardened lyrics of Black are plagued by annoying R n' B whinings. The Nashiem Myrick-produced "Whoa!" has crazy potential as a battle song but comes off more corny than fierce. But by far the saddest thing about *Life Story* is the times when Black starts to sound like Biggie. Coincidence? Black rhymes about his abusive mother, dealing/robbing to eat and being in and out of prison.

If Bad Boy wants to still exist in five years, Combs needs to stop trying to find another Christopher Wallace. It's disrespectful and not to mention impossible. You decide what you want, but Puff better pray Jennifer doesn't leave his ugly mug when this whole empire falls apart

—Joe Lucina

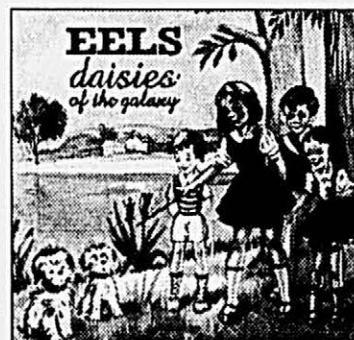


**THE PLATINUM ALBUM**  
VENGABOYS  
(ISBA)

Yorick, Denise, Roy, and Kim are back, and the cages at the Dome are beckoning! Continuing with their techno cheese beginnings, the Vengaboys have released their second effort, *The Platinum Album*, and according to the press release, they've promised to "climb to an higher level." An even higher level of what? From the opening notes of "Shalala Lala" to the closing orchestral schmaltz of "Opus 3 in D#," I felt like I was listening to the soundtrack to a Super Mario game. As a friend commented, you could make this album yourself, with an old-school Casio synthesizer. With uninspired and juvenile lyrics such as "Come sit down on my laptop/Let's do a little hiphop/Let's go into a chatroom/and do a little boom boom", this is some Grammy winning material!

In comparison to the last effort by the Vengaboys, *The Platinum Album* pales. Many of the songs on this album are retreads of hits such as "Boom Boom Boom Boom!!" and "Up & Down." Can a band plagiarize itself? There are great dance acts such as Aphrodite and Groove Armada coming out of the European scene right now that, even taken on a cheesy ironic level, the Vengaboys pale in comparison. With low production sound, weak singing, and uninspired lyrics, the refreshing fun that the Vengaboys brought with their last album is completely mitigated by this latest dismal effort. Don't waste your money.

—Le'Nise Brothers



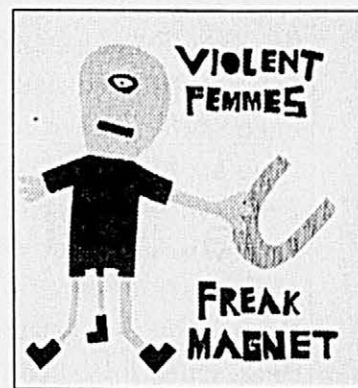
**DAISIES OF THE GALAXY**  
EELS  
(UNIVERSAL)

One of the first songs I remember hearing on the Buzz when it started in 1996 is "Novocaine for the Soul" by eels. The song had some definite Beck-ness to it, with its samples and morbid lyrics. They say "Daisies of the Galaxy" is a departure for frontman E (once named Mark Oliver Everett), in that it's much more folksy than its predecessors, and projects a more or less happy message. I think it still sounds a little like Beck, especially the track "I Like Birds," which is essentially a mellow ver-

sion of Beck's "Beercan." The last album, "Electro-shock Blues," dealt mostly with the suicide of E's sister as well as his mother's battle with cancer. With *Daisies of the Galaxy*, E set out to make a totally different kind of album: "I wanted to make a fun, pretty record that was full of life." The jacket artwork is taken from a Greek children's book from the fifties.

It's not all uplifting, mind you, like on the piano-ballad "It's a Motherfucker," where E laments "It's a motherfucker/Being here without you/Thinking 'bout the good times/Thinking 'bout the bad/And I won't ever be the same." The album features Peter Buck of R.E.M. on piano and Grant Lee Buffalo's Grant Lee Phillips on bass, as well as a horn section that opens the album New Orleans-style. Though there are no real singles on the record like "Novocaine for the Soul", the songs are by no means all ballads. There are definitely some good beats, like on "The Sound of Fear" and on the bluesy hidden track, which ends with E exclaiming "Godamn right, it's a beautiful day, uh-huh," followed by a sample of a cell-phone ringing.

—Josh Beitel



**FREAK MAGNET**  
VIOLENT FEMMES  
(EMI)

Alas, all changes of direction can't be good, as the Violent Femmes demonstrate on their new release, *Freak Magnet*. But let's begin with a little history. I first heard "Kiss Off" on a particularly drunken night at the old Mad Hatter's. My buddy and I were sitting with a girl who was singing the song at us, going word for word with lead singer Gordon Gano. It was great, the perfect anthem for adolescent sexual frustration.

Anyway, this album is nothing like that, except that Gano's still a sexually frustrated adolescent, now eighteen years and counting since their self-titled debut was released. On the one hand, it would be pretty lame if they just made the same album over and over again. But this electric, pseudo-punk stuff they've come up with is awful. The press release for the album talks more about their legendary live shows and their classics like "Add it up" and "Blister in the Sun" than it does about the current record it's supposed to be touting. If that's not enough of a sign, then consider some of the lyrics. In "Mosh Pit" Gano yells, "In the mosh pit mosh pit/What's for breakfast/what's for lunch/What's for dinner/Captain Crunch." It seems Gano's got a team of five-year-olds writing his lyrics for him now. As my girlfriend said after hearing a few snippets

of the album over the phone, "God, that's horrible."

—Josh Beitel

**MIND THE GAP**



**TRISTAN PSIONIC**  
(SONIC UNYON)

It has been four years since Tristan Psionic last released an album. Their 1996 release, *TPA Flight 028*, was a critical success and earned them a faithful following amongst listeners of Canadian College radio. The interim was spent running their independent record label Sonic Unyon. It was time well spent, as they have managed to launch the careers of bands like Tricky Woo and garner an award for Independent Label of the Year at the Canadian Music Awards. The time spent making this album, however, was not as well spent.

The album contains about as much energy as a pothead on Sunday morning. There is nothing exciting about any of the tracks. The songs drag on with rather infantile lyrics. The same riffs can be heard in several songs and often drown out the singer (all four members contribute vocals). It is not that this is a bad record, it is just that it is really boring. This album is weak — last week. It sounds as if it should have been released four years ago. It would be nice to think that the Canadian indie-rock scene has moved on from messy haircuts and whining about girls. Dale Morningstar co-produced this album and it is not hard to hear the parallels with his earlier work with Thrush Hermit.

If you're a fan, by all means buy this album, you probably won't mind it. But if you're not, this album is not the best starting point for discovering the work of four otherwise very talented individuals.

—Jonathan Montpetit

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